

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending.

The claims were rejected over the prior art as follows:

* Claims 1-3 and 5-14 were rejected as anticipated by U.S. patent no. 4,974,919 (Muraki et al.); and

* Claims 4 was rejected as unpatentable over the Muraki et al. patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,377,336 (Shiraishi et al.).

Independent claim 1 has been amended based on limitations in original claim 3 to recite that at least one of the linear beam-forming lens system, the lens array section, and the condenser optical system is movable along an optical axis. As explained in the specification, that can facilitate defocusing the image and changing the line width of the linear image (page 18, lines 11-17).

Similarly, independent claim 7 has been amended based on limitations in original claim 12 to recite that at least one of the first cylindrical lens and the second cylindrical lens is movable along an optical axis. Again, that can facilitate defocusing the image and changing the line width of the linear image (page 29, lines 17-22).

As discussed below, applicant respectfully submits that the claims, as amended, should be allowable over the cited references. With respect to the claimed features of movable components, the Office action refers to column 7, lines 24-26 of the Muraki et al. patent. That section of the patent refers to a "moving reflector 15." That, however, is significantly different from the claimed features in independent claims 3 and 7. First, the reflector is not the same as (nor does it suggest) any of the linear beam-forming lens system, the lens array section, or the condenser optical system recited in claim 1. Similarly, the reflector is not the same as (nor does it suggest) the cylindrical lenses recited in claim 7.

Furthermore, the Office action apparently ignores the limitations in claim 1 and 7 that at least one of the recited components is movable "along an optical axis." There is simply no disclosure or suggestion in the Muraki et al. patent that the reflector 15 is movable "along an optical axis" as recited in claims 1 and 7. In contrast, as explained in that patent, the reflector 15 can only be rotated:

The illumination device further includes a reflector 15 which is rotationally movable in predetermined directions, . . .

* * *

When the reflector 15 is rotationally moved about the two axes x and y . . .

(Col. 5, lines 2-4; col. 6, lines 33-34; *see also* FIG. 2) (Underscoring added)

Nor does the Shiraishi et al. patent disclose or suggest the foregoing features of claims 1 and 7. Although that patent discloses that certain lenses may be movable, they are movable only on a plane that is perpendicular to the optical axis:

Therefore, the synthetic fly-eye lenses 41A, 41B, 41C and 41D are able to be two-dimensionally moved on the plane (on the surface of the drawing sheet) perpendicular to optical axis AX.

(Col. 15, lines 55-58) (Underscoring added) There is, therefore, no suggestion, either in the Muraki et al. patent or the Shiraishi et al. patent—taken alone or in combination—of the subject matter of claims 1 and 7, as well as the dependent claims.

In addition, applicant notes that there is no suggestion of a scanning moving section that moves the linear beam (on the processed face) and the processed face in relation to one another, as recited in dependent claim 14.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the claims.

Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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